STORY: KIMIO YANAGISAWA
ART: YOUSUKE MORI
TRANSLATION BY JENNIFER J. WARD
ADAPTATION BY ALEXANDRA E. SWANSON
YKS SERVICES LLC/SKY JAPAN, INC

...HE'D DRIVE YOU OUT OF THE COMPA-NY?!
YUP.
HE SHOULDN'T NEED TO THINK ABOUT GETTING RID OF YOU UNTIL THAT CHILD IS OLDER.
HIS OTHER SON IS STILL ONLY TEN YEARS OLD, RIGHT?
NO WAY ...
AT EAR-LIEST, NEXT MONTH.

MangaBox

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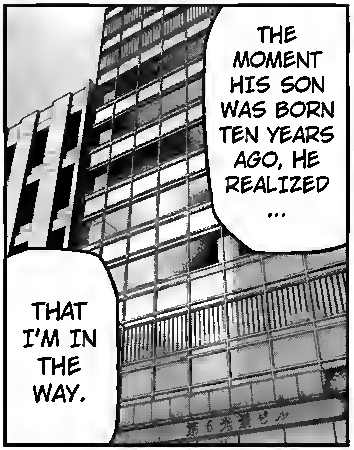
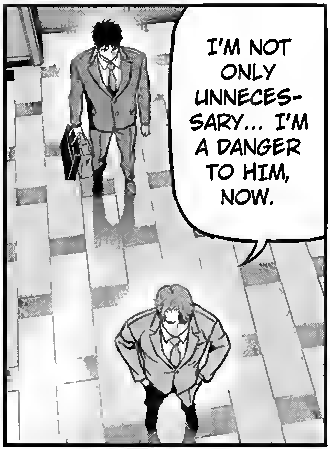
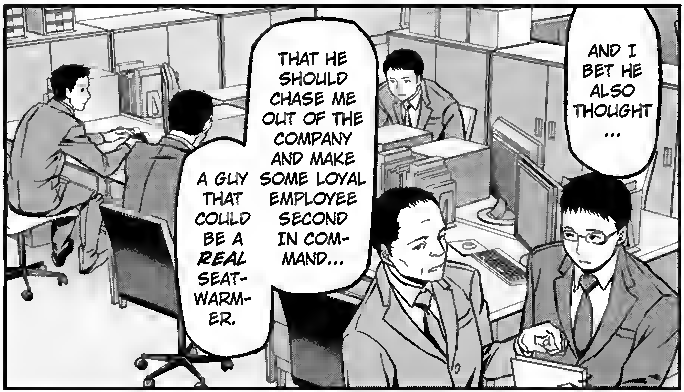
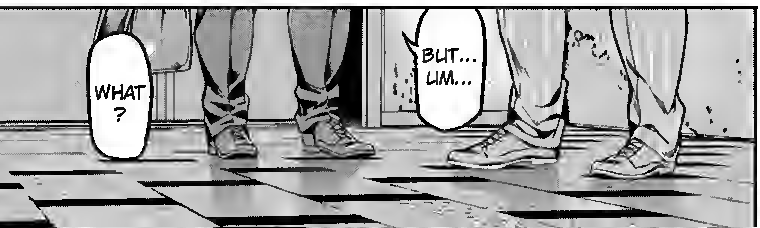
IF HE'S SMART, HE'S THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE...
ABOUT HOW LONG HE CAN KEEP WORKING... NO... HOW LONG HE'LL BE ALIVE.
LOOK, KOUTAROU. MY DAD--THE CEO--IS ALREADY TURNING SIXTY-EIGHT.
I'M GOING TO GET MARRIED AND HAVE KIDS SOON ENOUGH...
IF I HAVE A SON, THAT WILL CREATE A PROBLEM.
AND THAT MAKES ME...
NOTHING BUT A SEED FOR TROUBLE TO HIM.
I SEE...


THE MOMENT HIS SON WAS BORN TEN YEARS AGO, HE REALIZED ...
THAT I'M IN THE WAY.


I'M NOT ONLY UNNECES-SARY... I'M A DANGER TO HIM, NOW.

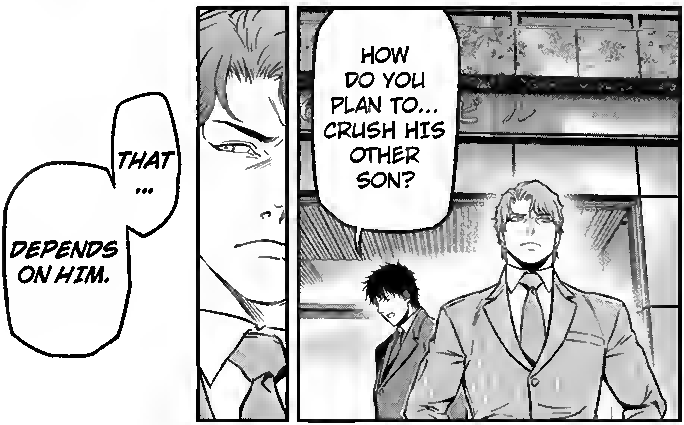

A GUY THAT COULD BE A REAL SEAT-WARM-ER.
THAT HE SHOULD CHASE ME OUT OF THE COMPANY AND MAKE SOME LOYAL EMPLOYEE SECOND IN COM-MAND...
AND I BET HE ALSO THOUGHT ...


WHAT ?
BUT... LIM...

THERE'S NO ONE WHO CAN REPLACE ME.
THAT GREEDY OLD MAN DOESN'T WANT JUST ANYONE WARMING THE SEAT.
HE HASN'T REPLACED YOU YET, HAS HE?
NOPE... AND THE REASON FOR THAT IS SIMPLE.
...I UNDER-STAND.
FULL SPIN
THAT'S ENOUGH OF THIS TALK. WE'RE GOING TO THE TOUBU TV STATION.
Y-YES, SIR!

THERE'S NO HARM IN KNOWING ABOUT YOUR BOSS'S SITUATION, NOW, IS THERE?
...NO, SIR.

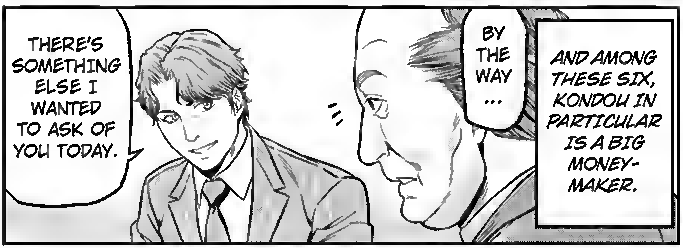
...
MAY I JUST ASK ONE THING?


HOW DO YOU PLAN TO... CRUSH HIS OTHER SON?
THAT ...
DEPENDS ON HIM.

MEETING ROOM NO 3
WE CAME TODAY TO THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING ONE OF OURS, KONDOU...
TOUBU TELE-VISION STATION, ODAIBA
OH, NO! WE'RE INDEBTED TO YOU FOR ACCEPTING OUR PROPOSAL!
FOR YOUR PRO-GRAM...
I'M VERY PLEASED TO MEET YOU!
OH, THIS IS MY P.A., KUROKI.
THEN, PLEASE, SIT DOWN, AKA-TSUKI-SAN, AND...?

I SEE!
YOU'RE QUITE HANDSOME! I WOULDN'T HAVE EXPECTED ANYTHING LESS FROM CHIEF AKATSUKI'S P.A., THOUGH!
INDEED! HE'S ALL BANGED UP TODAY, THOUGH.
HA HA HA ...
THIS IS THE PRODUCER WE'LL BE WORKING WITH.
I'M NAGAI. NICE TO MEET YOU.
WE'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET KONDOU-SAN TO STAR IN OUR UPCOMING LAWYER DRAMA.
I THINK WE CAN MAKE A REALLY GOOD SHOW, THANKS TO YOU.

A NUMBER OF HIGH-PROFILE STARS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH AKATSUKI PRO.
KURO-KICHI, AN ONEE* COMEDIAN WITH A WICKED TONGUE.
ELIZA, A HALF-JAPANESE FORMER MODEL WHO IS ACTIVE IN VARIETY SHOWS.
KAORI-EJIMA, A YOUNG AND SWIFTLY RISING STAR.
TOSHISHIGE KONDOU, WHO WAS SELECTED TO STAR IN THIS UPCOMING DRAMA.
TESUROU IKEKABE, A CHAR-ACTER ACTOR.
DAIKI MARUYAMA, WHO'S VERY IN DEMAND FOR SERIOUS SUPPORT-ING ROLES.



*AN MALE ACTOR/COMEDIAN WHO PLAYS AN EFFEMINATE CHARACTER ON VARIETY SHOWS.

WE WERE HOPING YOU SAVED SOME GOOD SPOTS FOR TWO OF OUR NEW PROMISING ACTORS AS PART OF THE BARTER FOR KONDOU.
BAR-TER ...
OF COURSE! YOUR PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS A GOOD CHOICE.
THEN I'LL SEND YOU THE PAPER-WORK VIA EMAIL.
IT'S CUSTOM FOR THEM TO TAKE A COUPLE OF SUPPORTING ACTORS WHEN WE LEND THEM A BIG NAME.
THAT THING HE TOLD ME ABOUT ON THE WAY HERE, HUH
OKAY... TONIGHT WE'RE SEEING A MOVIE PRODUCER!
YOU'VE GOT TO LEARN THE SOCIAL GRACES, BIT BY BIT.

THERE'S NO CONTRACT INVOLVED TODAY; WE'RE JUST KEEPING RELATIONS BETWEEN US WARM.
I GUESS IT'S MY LOT IN LIFE TO KEEP CERTAIN THINGS WARM, HUH?

HE KEEPS GOING EVERY DAY FOR THE SAKE OF HIS AMBITION...